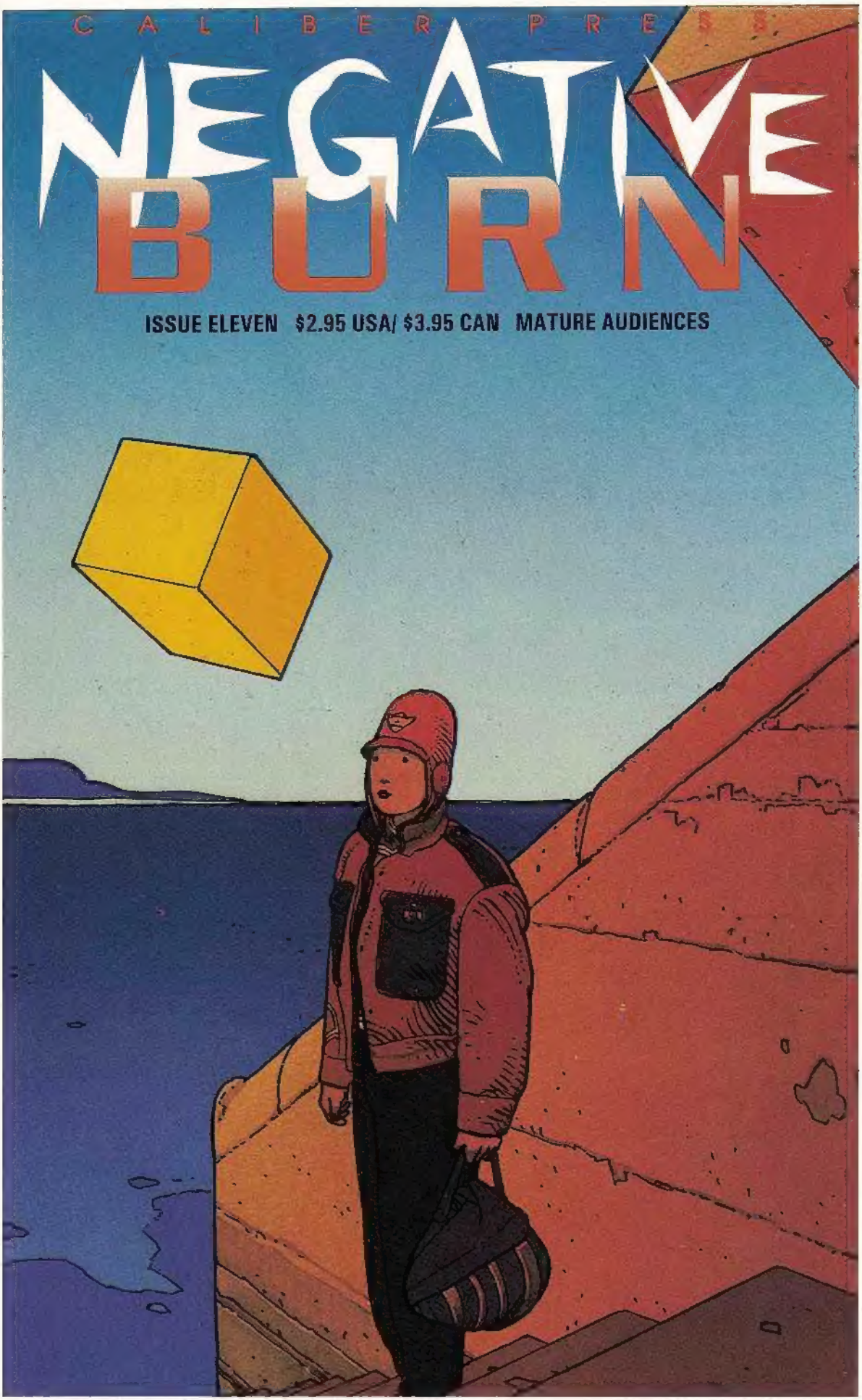
CALIBER PRESS

NEGATIVE BURN

ISSUE ELEVEN $2.95 USA/ $3.95 CAN MATURE AUDIENCES



ALAN MOORE • BRIAN BOLLAND • NEIL GAIMAN • PHILLIP HESTER • MATT FEAZELL • MARK CHIARELLO

NEGATIVE BURN

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER ELEVEN

an anthology
Joe Pruett /Editor

P.O. Box 672162, Marietta, GA 30067-0037

WE CAN GET THEM FOR YOU WHOLESALE.....Page 1
original story by Neil Gaiman
adapted by Joe Pruett
illustrated by Ken Meyer Jr.

MR. MAMOULIAN.....Page 11
written and illustrated by Brian Bolland

ALAN MOORE'S SONGBOOK.....Page 12
written by Alan Moore
illustrated by Philip Hester

ANATOMY LESSON.....Page 18
written and illustrated by Chas Truog

SKETCHBOOK.....Page 20
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TWILIGHT PEOPLE.....Page 24
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written by Doug Wheeler
illustrated by Matt Feazell, Donna Barr, and Mike Hoffman

THE HUNGRY ONES.....Page 33
original story by Martha Henry
adapted by Malcolm Bourne
illustrated by David Windett

Cover Art by Moebius

A KRÜNCHY FROGG PRODUCTION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH MAD HATTER STUDIOS INTERNATIONAL

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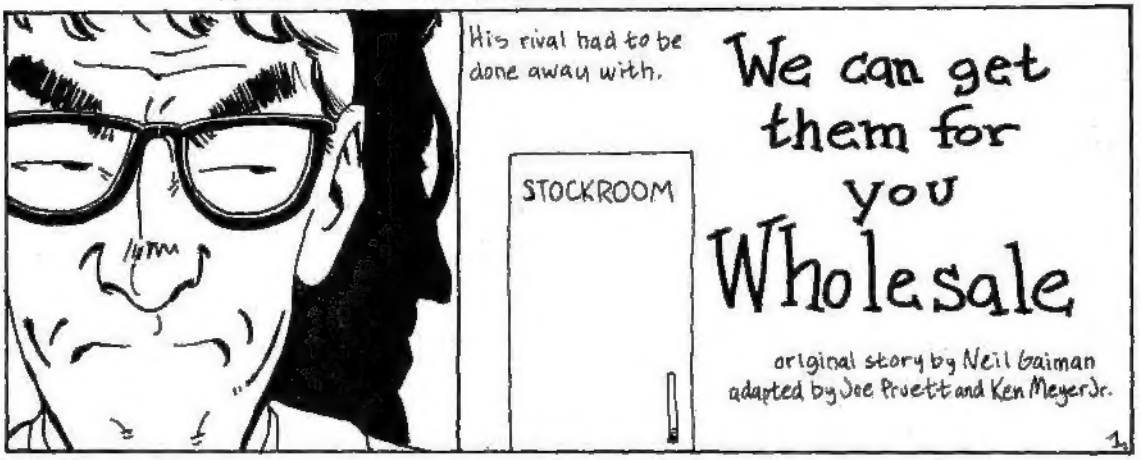
Please make check or money order in U.S. dollars payable to **Joe Pruett.**
P.O.Box 672162, Marietta, GA 30067-0037

Peter Pinter maintained that the avoidance of trouble was the highest attainable good. He had lived his life according to this precept. In all respects except one (his inability to pass up a bargain), he was a very moderate man. He did not go to extremes. His speech was proper and reserved; he rarely overate; he drank enough to be sociable and no more; he was far from rich and in no ways poor. He liked people and people liked him.
STOCKROOM
CLAMMAGES

The love of a woman can do strange things to a man, even one so colorless as Peter Pinter. The discovery that Miss Gwendolyn Thorpe was messing about (as the vulgar would put it) with a smooth young gentleman from the accounting department - after, mark you, she had consented to wear an engagement ring that had taken Peter almost an entire lunch hour to choose - can do strange things to a man indeed.

Peter knew what he had to do.


His rival had to be done away with.
STOCKROOM
We can get them for you Wholesale
original story by Neil Gaiman
adapted by Joe Pruett and Ken Meyer Jr.

No listings for Assassins, Killers or Murderers. Ah, pest control looks promising. However, they seem mostly concerned with rats, mice, fleas, cockroaches, rabbits and moles.
This one looks interesting, though. "Complete, discreet disposal of irksome and unwanted mammals, etc."
"Ketch, Hare, Burke and Ketch. The olde Firm."
... Just a phone number, though.
Ketch, Hare, Burke, Ketch, can I help you?
Er - how big - I mean, what size mammals do you go up to? To, uh, dispose of, that is.
Well, that would depend on what size sir requires.
CLICK
A person?
"Of course, sir. Be at the Dirty Donkey pub tonite at eight o'clock."
"Carry a copy of The Financial Times and our operative will meet you there."
2

THE DIRTY DONKEY
Peter Pinter?
Kemble. Burton Kemble of KetchHareBurkeKetch. I hear you have a job for us.
You don't look like a killer.
Oh lor' bless us, no. I'm not actually part of the work-force, sir.
I'm in sales.
Can we-er-talk freely here?
Sure. Nobody's interested. Now, how many people would you like disposed of?
Only one.
His name's Archibald Gibbons and he works in—
3

We can go into that later, sir, if you don't mind. Let's just quickly go over the financial side. First of all, the contract will cost you £500... although there's always the special offer.
special offer?
Two for the price of one, sir.
Financial Times
Mmmm. That works out to only £250 each, which is a bargain.
But I'm afraid I don't have anyone else I want killed.
A pity, Sir. For two, we could've knocked the price down to, well, say, £450 for both of them.
Really?
Well, it gives our operatives something to do, sir. If you must know, there really isn't enough work in this particular line to keep them occupied. Not like the ol' days.
Isn't there just one other person you'd like to see dead?
Hmm. I don't know...
Wait! Yes, I do know!
Gwendolyn Thorpe!
A very wise decision, if you don't mind me saying so, sir.
That will be £450, I believe?
Did I say £450, sir? Good gracious, me, I do apologize. I beg your pardon, sir, I was thinking of our bulk rate. It would be £475 for two people.
Bulk rate?
Of course, but I doubt sir would be interested in that.
No No, tell me about it!
Very Well, sir.
Bulk rate, £450, would be for a large job - ten people.
Ten people?
But that's only £45 each.
Yes, sir, it's the large order that makes it profitable.
I see. Hmm. Could you be here same time tomorrow night? I need to think about it.
Of course, sir.
4.

WORLD'S GREATEST LOVER
1. Archie b.
2. Gwenny
3.
4.
5.
1. Archie b.
2. Gwenny
3. Physics Teacher
4. Mr. Hunter
Didn't give me my raise.
...berated me in secondary school...
5. Simon Ellis
6. James?
7. Sharon Hart
... laughed...
8.
NEWS
...annoying snicker...
9. Woman next door + dog
...yappy dog...
...shat in hall.
10. Great uncle Mervyn
Rich?
5.

DIRT
DONK

Ta-daaa!

Oh my.
I'm afraid this isn't ten people. You've counted the woman next door and her dog as one. That's an extra seventy pounds.

How about if we forget about the dog?
The dog's as bad as the woman - or worse.
Then I'm afraid we have a slight problem...
...unless...

"What?"
DIR
FAP

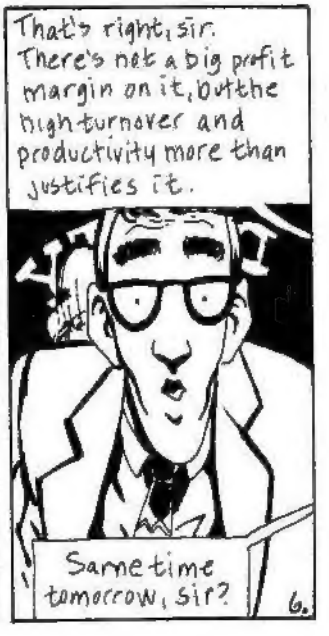
Unless you'd like to take advantage of our wholesale rate. But of course sir wouldn't -
Wholesale?
Tell me about it!

Well, sir, we can, uhh, get them for you wholesale.
£17.50 each, for every quarry after the first 50-
or a tenner for every one over 200.

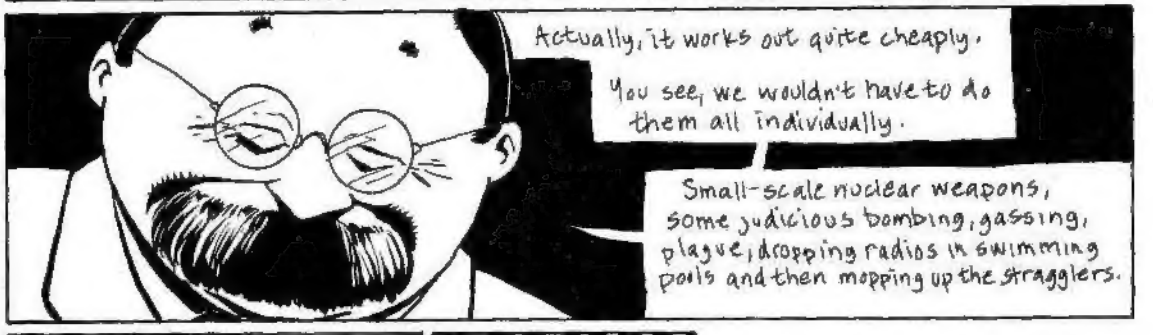
I suppose you'd go down to a fiver if I wanted a thousand people knocked off?

Oh no, sir. If you're talking those sorts of figures, we can do them for a quid each.

one pound?


That's right, sir. There's not a big profit margin on it, but the high turnover and productivity more than justifies it.
Same time tomorrow, sir?

RELATIVE EASE
Trace your lineage
RELATIVE EASE
Trace your Lineage only takes minutes
Hours of Operatio
11:00a.m.-7:00p
or by appt.
"If approximately fourteen million, seventy-two thousand, eight-hundred and eleven people died, I would be King of England."
Trace your
Do you have a special discount for those kinds of figures?"


Actually, it works out quite cheaply.
You see, we wouldn't have to do them all individually.
Small-scale nuclear weapons, some judicious bombing, gassing, plague, dropping radios in swimming pools and then mopping up the stragglers.

Say, four thousand pounds.
Four thou-
That's inCREdible!
"Our operatives will be glad of the work, sir."
"We pride ourselves on doing right by our wholesale customers."
Fine. It's a deal.
I'll meet you here tomorrow night to work out the details.
Always a pleasure, Sir.

KHBK, can I help you?

I was wondering if I could speak to Mr. Kemble.

I'll see if he's available.

Kemble speaking.

Ah, Mr. Kemble. Sorry if I got you out of bed.

This is, um, Peter Pinter.

Yes, Mr. Pinter.

Well, I'm sorry it's so late...

...only I was wondering...

...how much would it cost to kill everybody.

...everybody in the world.

Everybody? All the people?

Yes, how much?

I mean, for an order like that, you'd have to have some kind of big discount.

How much would it be? For everyone?

Nothing at all, Mr. Pinter.

We only have to be asked, you see.

We always have to be asked.

But—

when would you start?

Start?

Right away.

Now.

We've been ready for a long time.

But we had to be asked, Mr. Pinter. Goodnight.

It has been a pleasure doing business with you.

What on earth did he mean? "We always have to be asked."
Strange.
Nobody does anything for nothing in this world.
CLICK
Perhaps I've been over reacting; perhaps there was a perfectly innocent reason Archie and Gwendolyn entered the stockroom together.
I'll talk to her first thing tomorrow morning
What's that- a cat fight?
I hope someone throws a shoe at them.
HELP
I've missed something somewhere.
THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
Something important
"We've been ready for a long time...
NOOO
HELP
OH GOD
9.

We had to be asked
Definately
THE
END!

MR. MAMOULIAN

CONCEPTUAL

14 BOLLAND 26 6 87

HI
I'M SUZY RICKENBACKER. WE MET IN HERE A FEW WEEKS BACK
REMEMBER ?
I WAS WITH MY SISTER LINDA. SHE DREW A PORTRAIT OF YOU
YOU WERE MORE ABSTRACT I SEEM TO REMEMBER
I'M CONCEPTUAL NOW
CONCEPTUAL ?
-UH HUH
THE OTHER DAY FOR INSTANCE I PICKED UP A ROCK IN MY BACK GARDEN IN HAMPSTEAD, TOOK A TRAIN UP TO SCOTLAND, WRAPPED UP THE ROCK, AND MAILED IT TO MYSELF
ISN'T THAT WILD ?
WILD
IT HASN'T ARRIVED YET BUT ...
BUBBLES! HI
THAT'S MY GIRLFRIEND BUBBLES BOURBASCH. ISN'T THAT A RIDICULOUS NAME
SHE KNOWS LORDS AND DOOKS AND THINGS. I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL MY DAD !
SU ! DO SHIFT YOUR ARSE! CLIFFORD'S PORSCH IS OUTS DE !
OKAY OKAY ! I'M COMING F'R CHRIS'SAKES !
BUBBLES BOURBASCH

Positively Bridge Street

A song by ALAN MOORE

illustrated by PHILLIP HESTER — inked by ANDE PARKS

Fifteen stone in his dickey bow
he overlooks the dance floor

He's just that side of twenty-five
And just this side of broadmoor

And at closing time
the police withdraw

they've sub-contracted out the law

to a local high-risk escort corps
with a celebrated penchant for

the well-kept door,
the settled score
establishes a new rapport
where a deftly wielded two-by-four
gives the bleeding heart a broken jaw

then collects their teeth
from the toilet floor

you go out for a soiree,
end up with a sore

if you want a furore
he'll provide the roar

He puts the HARD

in Hardcore

Fifteen years in her glitter gear
She dances round her handbag

Her perfume whispers "Je t'adore"

Her sagging jaw says "jetlag"

But tonight she's out without the brat
having left him vaguely baby-sat

By the senile bat from the upstairs flat

She went out downtown in her sequined tat;
warm hands, cold heart, red drawers, no hat

To a dance-floor like a wrestling mat
where it's one submission and that's that

She endures a tepid line of chat
from a self-styled sexual acrobat

And later on in his Dad's flat
she cries and asks him if she's fat

Above A tape by
LINDA RONSTADT

Fifteen nicks in his riot stick
He smiles with satisfaction

When there's no more beers
it ends in tears, or else it
ends in traction

With his size two brain and
his size twelve feet

There's a beat to tread and a head to beat
if he leaves a mark it'll be discreet

Where it won't show up
on the record sheet

Instead of light he gives out heat

While suspects bleat in the mystery seat

He isn't short

he isn't sweet

He grinds out arrests
like wars grind meat

He adjusts his helmet,
feels complete

POLICE

He anticipates the coming treat:

There's a face
his truncheon
longs to meet

And it's Friday night in Bridge Street

Anatomy Lesson

"A FEW HOURS BEFORE HIS DEATH, THIS OLD MAN TOLD ME THAT HE HAD LIVED A HUNDRED YEARS..."
"...HE FELT NO PHYSICAL PAIN, ONLY WEAKNESS, AND THUS..."
"...SEATED ON A BED IN THE HOSPITAL OF SANTA MARIA NOVELLA..."

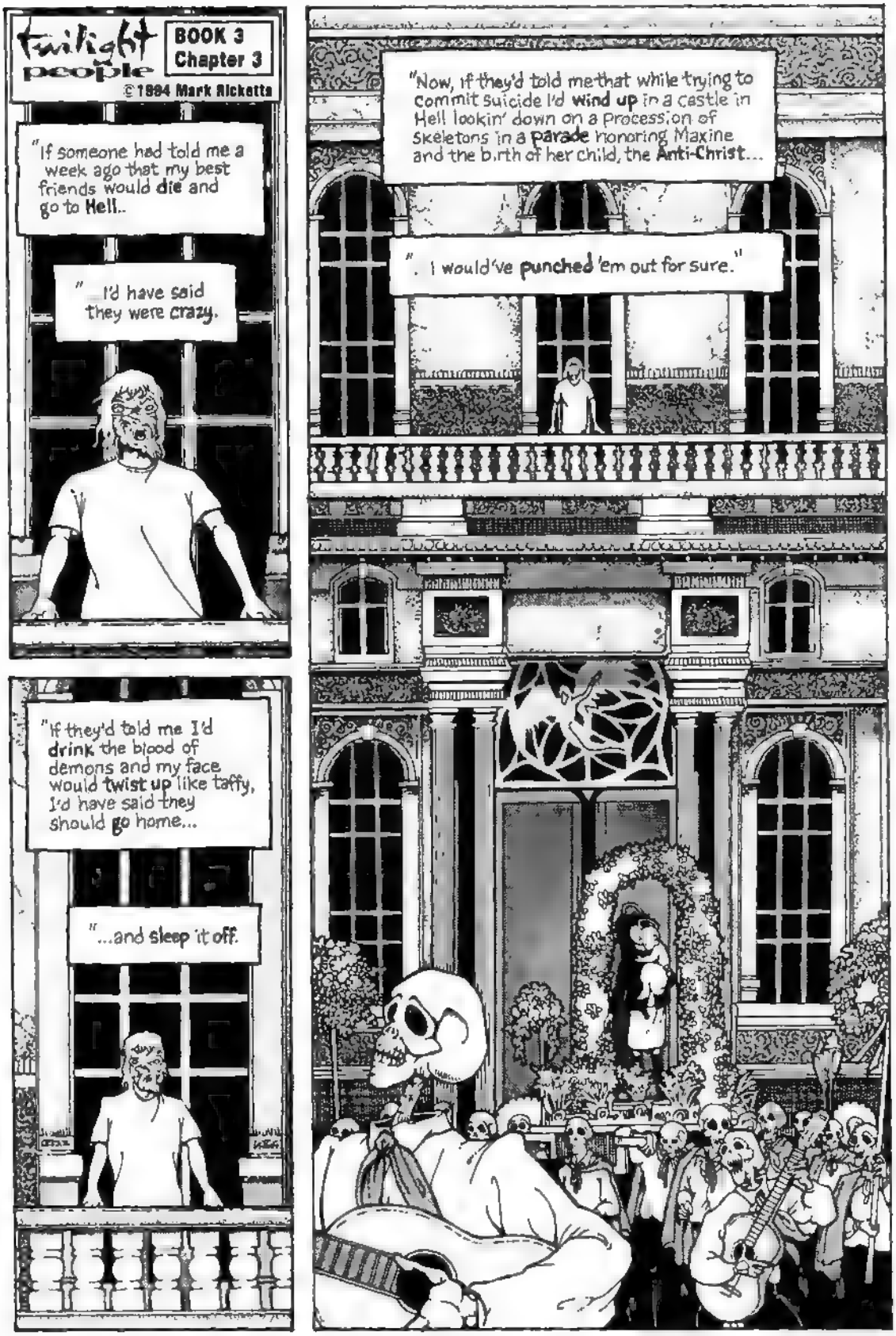
"...WITHOUT ANY MOVEMENT OR SYMPTOM OF DISTRESS, HE GENTLY PASSED FROM LIFE INTO DEATH."
"I CARRIED OUT THE AUTOPSY TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF SUCH A CALM DEATH..."
LEONARDO DA VINCI
CIRCA 1504
©CHAZ TRUOG— 1994

mark chiarello

Sketchbook

MBX
CHIARELLO
greetings from...
Manuel
Noriega!

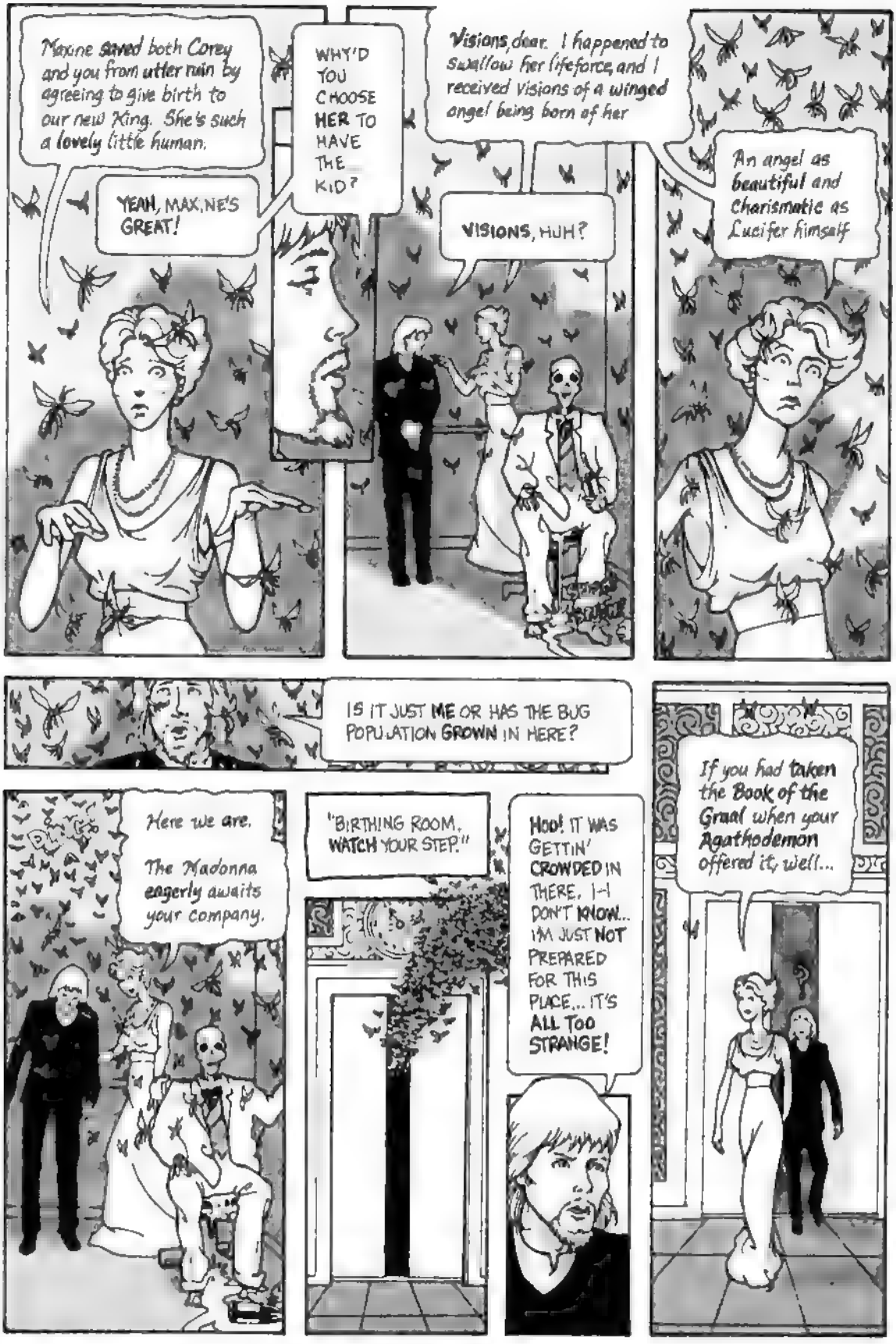
oh, honey, life's not so bad, is it?


twilight people
BOOK 3
Chapter 3
©1994 Mark Ricketts
"If someone had told me a week ago that my best friends would die and go to Hell..
"...I'd have said they were crazy.
"If they'd told me I'd drink the blood of demons and my face would twist up like taffy, I'd have said they should go home...
"...and sleep it off.
"Now, if they'd told me that while trying to commit suicide I'd wind up in a castle in Hell lookin' down on a procession of skeletons in a parade honoring Maxine and the birth of her child, the Anti-Christ...
"...I would've punched 'em out for sure."

Excuse me, Franklin, but Maxine is just dying to see you.
HAS SHE?...
No dear, but we should straighten you up a bit before your visit.
Now, say these words, Demon Est Deus Inversus...
OOOKAY... DEMON EST DEUS INVERSUS!
WOAH!
WOOOO! WHAT A RUSH!
My, aren't we handsome.
WHATARELIEF... WOW! UH, OH YEAH, THANKS..., AND THE SUIT! IT-IT-IT'S OVER-WHELMING AND WWEIRD AND...
... I CAN... I CAN SEE... I DON'T NEED MY GLASSES. I'VE WORN GLASSES SINCE I WAS SIX! SIX YEARS OLD!!!
Calm down, dear. We need to take the elevator to the birthing room. Come...

THEY FOGGED OVER IN THE WINTER AND SLIPPED OFF MY NOSE IN... HOW'D YOU DO THAT!?!
Darling, I was an angel once.
DING!
LIKE IN HEAVEN, RIGHT? WOW! HEY, WHAT'S THIS MUSIC? IT'S COMIN' FROM THE ELEVATOR? IT SOUNDS GREAT!!
Thirteen please.
HE ALWAYS WRITES THE BEST TUNES, SIR.
NEXT STOP...
...FLOOR THIRTEEN!
I suppose you haven't quite accepted the fact that you've gone from an insignificant human to a demigod in a matter of days. Still, you managed to find your way here without any help, didn't you darling?
JEEZ! WHAT'S TH' BUZZIN'? HEY!!
YOU KNOW LADY, SARTRE WAS WAY OFF, THIS PLACE IS NONSTOP...
...NUTTINESS!
DAMN, LADY!
Call me Diedre.
DIEDRE, WHAT ARE THESE FREAKIN' BUGS ABOUT?
Oh yes, that!
Why, it's demon magic, my dear.

It's a looong story about how Nicky, my husband, and I struggled to get our beautiful wings back.
Well, as you can see, our wings were never restored, but...
..we arrre capable of transforming into the most hideous and magical of beings.
Oh, but all that happened before your time, annnnd... well, I must confess that Nicky and I've done a lot of bad things... but we intend to make good on all our little... mmm, let's call them faux pas, shall we...
I SUPPOSE THE BUGS DON'T BOTHER YOU?
Monsters, no more!... We intend to create our own little slice of Heaven around here- once the laughter of a child returns... ...to our ears.
DID YOU SAY MONSTERS?
Ooooh, frightening beasts, and I believe you've met my sisters. You know it was my intervention that kept you from having your bones picked clean by those three rebellious little hellions.
OH YEAH, WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
Well, dear, your friend Corey thought that if he helped you achieve great power you would come charging into Hell to save Maxine and him from the big, bad monsters.
I SHOULDA KNOWN...
... COREY'S GOT A WILD HAIR I'VE TRIED TALK'N' TO HIM ABOUT IT, BUT HE'S OUT OF HAND! UH, DIEDRE, HOW MUCH LONGER IS THIS RIDE GONNA BE, HUH?
THESE BUGS ARE DRIVIN' ME CRAZY!!
Soon dear.


Maxine saved both Corey and you from utter ruin by agreeing to give birth to our new King. She's such a lovely little human.
YEAH, MAX, NE'S GREAT!
WHY'D YOU CHOOSE HER TO HAVE THE KID?
Visions, dear. I happened to swallow her lifeforce, and I received visions of a winged angel being born of her
VISIONS, HUH?
An angel as beautiful and charismatic as Lucifer himself
IS IT JUST ME OR HAS THE BUG POPULATION GROWN IN HERE?
Here we are.
The Madonna eagerly awaits your company.
"BIRTHING ROOM. WATCH YOUR STEP."
HOO! IT WAS GETTIN' CROWDED IN THERE. I-I DON'T KNOW... I'M JUST NOT PREPARED FOR THIS PLACE... IT'S ALL TOO STRANGE!
If you had taken the Book of the Graal when your Agathodemon offered it, well...

OKAY, I'LL BITE... SO WHAT'S AN AG-ATHO-DEMON?
That's the one. He destroyed my beautiful Sisters and with HER help, I'll wager.
It iS tRUth. dAT ONE is A puNy HumaN aN' Not CAPAble o' BEstin' An ANCient, But STILL Dere muST Be SACrifICES Med FOr da Boy-KING.
What do you know of Sacrifice, Ghede?
QuiET DoWN, litTLe siSTEr... In a FEW tHOusanD yEArs, WHen dE OFFenSive DeMIgOd iS unPROTECTed...
what?!
SLiiCHT!
In a thousand years he may be more powerful than Zimimar! Why, Ghede...
...is that..?
HEH!
"Da vEry bLAdE forGed in HEavEn, snATcHEd FRom hEAven, And uSed t' bRing DOWN dE thrOne of HeLL!"
I MUST Have it!
CONTINUED

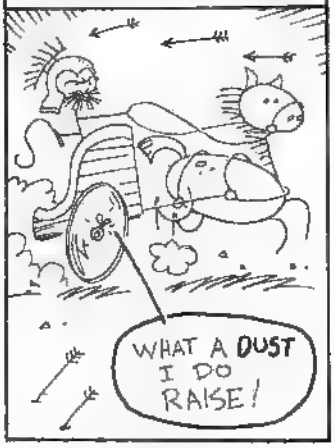
CLASSICS DESECRATED

AESOP'S QUICKIES #1

DEFILED BY **DOUG WHEELER** AND **MATT FEAZELL**

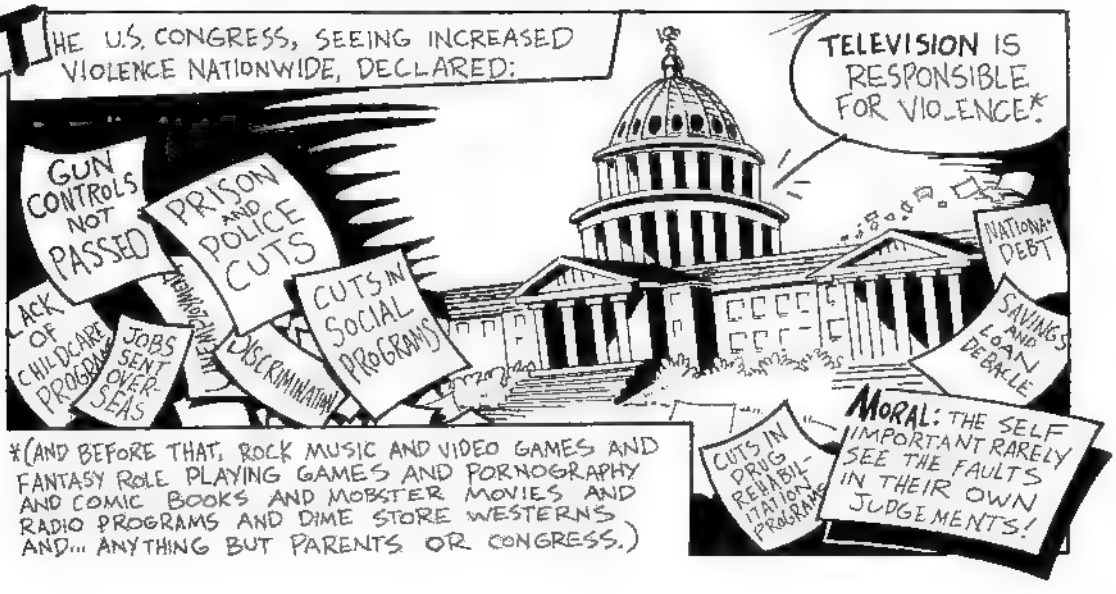
A DOG, HAVING URINATED IN THE SEA, PROCLAIMED:

A FLY, SITTING ON THE AXLE OF A **CHARIOT WHEEL**, COMMENTED:



A FOX, SEEING HIS HUGE SHADOW NEAR NIGHTFALL, SAID:

THE U.S. CONGRESS, SEEING INCREASED VIOLENCE NATIONWIDE, DECLARED:


TELEVISION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLENCE*
GUN CONTROLS NOT PASSED
PRISON AND POLICE CUTS
CUTS IN SOCIAL PROGRAMS
UNEMPLOYMENT
DISCRIMINATION
LACK OF CHILDCARE PROGRAMS
JOBS SENT OVERSEAS
NATIONAL DEBT
SAVINGS AND LOAN DEBACLE
CUTS IN DRUG REHABILITATION PROGRAMS
MORAL: THE SELF IMPORTANT RARELY SEE THE FAULTS IN THEIR OWN JUDGEMENTS!

*(AND BEFORE THAT, ROCK MUSIC AND VIDEO GAMES AND FANTASY ROLE PLAYING GAMES AND PORNOGRAPHY AND COMIC BOOKS AND MOBSTER MOVIES AND RADIO PROGRAMS AND DIME STORE WESTERNS AND... ANYTHING BUT PARENTS OR CONGRESS.)

CLASSICS DESECRATED™
DESECRATED BY DOUG WHEELER AND DONNA BARR
AESOP'S "THE HORSE AND THE STAG"
ONE DAY, A HORSE AND A STAG GOT INTO A SEVERE DISPUTE...
MISTER ED IS A BIGGER HOLLYWOOD STAR!
NO! BAMBI IS!
...WHICH THEY EVENTUALLY DECIDED TO SETTLE IN A TYPICAL MATURE AMERICAN FASHION.
I'LL SHOW YOU! I'LL GET MY FRIEND THE HUNTER TO SHOOT YOU!
AND SO THE HORSE CONVINCED HIS TRIGGER-HAPPY FRIEND TO ENGAGE IN THE "SPORT" OF HUNTING THE STAG.
HEY! IT'S A FAIR FIGHT THE STAG HAS JUST AS MUCH OPPORTUNITY TO COME DOWN AND PURCHASE FIREARMS AS I DO.
HAVING COMPLETED THE DEED, THE TWO GLOATED OVER THEIR VICTIM.
THANKS FOR AVENGING ME AGAINST THAT UNCOUTH STAG.
YEAH YEAH
SPTUI!!
HEY! I'M OUT OF GLUE! HOW WILL I MOUNT THIS STAGS HEAD NOW?
GLUE
MAIN INGREDIENT: HORSE
MORAL: A LITTLE GLUE CAN CEMENT OLD FRIENDSHIPS.

CLASSICS DESECRATED

AESOP'S "THE WOOD-CUTTER AND GODZELLA"

DEFILED BY DOUG WHEELER AND MIKE HOFFMAN

ONE DAY A WOODCUTTER TOOK A BRIEF BREAK FROM HIS WORK TO MAKE A VIDPHONE CALL IN DOWNTOWN TOKYO...
...WHEN SUDDENLY GODZELLA CAME RUNNING UP TO HIM, AND ASKED HIM TO HELP HER ELUDE THE JAPANESE DEFENSE FORCE
HIDE INSIDE THAT BUILDING, AND I'LL FOOL THEM INTO THINKING YOU'VE CONTINUED ON!
HONORABLE WOOD-CUTTER, DID YOU NOTICE IF GODZELLA CAME BY HERE?
THERE ARE SO MANY MONSTERS IN TOKYO-- WHAT DOES THIS "GODZELLA" LOOK LIKE?
LIKE A GIANT WOMAN IN A CHEAP RUBBER LIZARD SUIT.
OH! THAT GODZELLA! YES, SHE STOMPED PAST HERE AND CONTINUED OUT OF THE CITY!
EVERYONE GO HOME NOW! GODZELLA HAS LEFT.
BUT WAIT! I SAID GODZELLA LEFT THE CITY!!
I KNOW. THANK YOU.
RAWWGH!
DON'T BLAME ME FOR SAYING ONE THING WHILE TRYING TO GIVE YOU AWAY WITH MY FINGER!--
BLAME THE DUMB AMERICAN WHO DUBBED THE WRONG DIALOGUE OVER MY VOICE! I NEVER PROMISED YOU A THING!
STOMP!
MORAL:
"NEVER GIVE A GIANT WOMAN IN A RUBBER SUIT THE FINGER"

THE HUNGRY ONES
ISIBEDLELE ALL SAINTS
ALL SAINTS HOSPITAL
UMTATA
ORIGINAL STORY
BY MARTHA HENRY
ADAPTATION WRITTEN
BY MALCOLM BOURNE
ARTWORK BY DAVID W NDETT
LETTERING BY DENISE NASH
SURELY YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THAT YOUR WIFE WAS STARVING?
YOU CAN SEE HOW MANY ARE STARVING HERE.
-- NO, I D DN'T REALIZE...

WON'T YOU HAVE SOME, LOVE? DO YOU GOOD TO HAVE A PROPER BREAKFAST
OH, I COULDN'T.
"OH I COULDN'T" WAS WHAT SHE SAID EVERY BREAKFAST TIME.
I COULDN'T, NOT AT THIS TIME IN THE MORNING. YOU HAVE THEM.
YOU NEED A BREAK. WE'LL GO TO THE COAST. TRANSKEI.
WELL...
WE'VE HAD SO MANY HAPPY HOLIDAYS THERE. THE TREE-LINED DESERTED BEACHES, THE GOLDEN SANDS. .
THE WOMEN WOULD BRING OYSTERS AND CRABS EACH MORNING, GATHERED A FEW MINUTES BEFORE FROM THE ROCKS. YOU REALLY RELAX THERE
F YOU LIKE...
EVEN THEN SHE WASN'T VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE IDEA.
CAN I COME IN? MAYBE WE CAN...
NO!!
SLAMMM!!!
WE HADN'T MADE LOVE FOR WEEKS. SHE'D BEGUN WEARING MY SHIRTS TO SLEEP IN.
BYE! REMEMBER - WE'RE OFF TO THE COAST TOMORROW!
BYE ..
SHE WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DISTANT, HER FACE GAUNT...

THE TRANSKEI WAS AS FLAT, BARREN AND DRY AS EVER ..
UMTATA 3 MILES
WE'LL GO TO THE HOLIDAY INN AND COOL DOWN FOR A WHILE...
...MEANWHILE, THE DROUGHT IS ENTERING ITS FOURTH MONTH...
I SUDDENLY REALISED HOW PALE LYNN LOOKED. HOW THIN...
...THEN WE'LL PROBABLY FEEL READY FOR A MEAL--
NO!
WE DROVE PAST THE LOCAL BUS STATION.

...WHAT ABOUT MANDELA?...
...THE INKATA KILLINGS...
.. WILL IT EVER WORK?
JO'BURG
I THINK WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE WORK PERMITS!
THEY'RE ALL "PAPER REFORMS"...I CAN'T SEE THE RIGHT WINGERS GIVING UP POWER WITHOUT A FIGHT.
YOU'RE ALWAYS SO NEGATIVE... VUYANI POSUAYO!
OF COURSE! YOU KNOW MY YOUNGEST SON DIED LAST WEEK ...
DESPITE THE WITCHDOCTOR'S POTIONS AND INCANTATIONS.
I'M JUST GLAD I INSISTED NOMONDE TAKE JOSEPH TO THE HOSPITAL HERE. SHE'S THERE NOW...
BY NOW, ALL I KNEW WAS THAT LYNN NEEDED WATER.

LOOKING BACK, I TREATED THEM APPALLINGLY.
THEY WERE TRYING TO HELP ME.
AREN'T THERE ANY PEOPLE HERE?!
MY WIFE NEEDS WATER! SHE'S...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING. THE WATER JUST LOOKED RED AND MUDDY.
THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT I WAS MAD...
...JUST RUNNING BACK TO THE CAR. IT MUST HAVE CONFIRMED THEIR WORST IMPRESSIONS OF WHITES.

LYNN? LYNN?!
HER HAND WAS COLD, CLAMMY...
I'D PASSED THAT SIGN MANY TIMES WITHOUT THINKING I'D EVER NEED IT.
ISIBEDLELE ALL SAINTS
ALL SAINTS HOSPITAL
UMTATA 3 MILES
NEARLY THERE, LYNN...
EMERGENCIES
HEY, YOU CAN'T--
WHAT DO YOU THINK?--
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY!

CAN I HELP YOU, MISTER ...?
AIDS
DOCTOR
TAKE JOSEPH POSUAYO TO THE CHILDREN'S BLOCK PLEASE, NURSE...HE'LL NEED A GLUCOSE DRIP--
EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT YOU CAN'T--
--DOCTOR, MY WIFE...
THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO. I WAS HELPLESS...
...USELESS.
SHE NEEDS FLUID, URGENTLY. WE'LL HAVE TO ADMIT HER.
SHE'LL NEED A BED ON CHILDREN'S BLOCK. GLUCOSE DRIP.
AND NOW, HERE WE ARE.

I SUPPOSE YOUR WIFE HAD BEEN WORRYING ABOUT HER FIGURE, DIETING?
NO...IT BEGAN 6 MONTHS AGO, WHEN WE LOST OUR BABY.
SHE SEEMED TO THINK LIFE ISN'T WORTH LIVING.
IT ISN'T WORTH LIVING, FOR SO MANY HERE. WEALTH IS NO GUARANTEE OF HAPPINESS. THE POOREST CHILDREN CAN LAUGH...FOR YOUR WIFE, IT'S DIFFERENT.
I KNOW. THEY CAN'T EAT. LYNN WON'T.
YES, I'M SORRY ...
...SO SORRY.
MY INSTINCTIVE REACTION IS TO OFFER HER MONEY.
BUT IT WOULDN'T BE HELPFUL, TO EITHER OF US.
I WANT TO SPEAK TO HER. BUT I DON'T KNOW HER LANGUAGE...
END

Chris J. Staros
1109 Grand Oaks Glen
Marietta, GA 30064

Dear Joe,
I am a big reader of intelligent comics and I have really enjoyed the past five issues of NEGATIVE BURN. Like I often say to people: There are great parallels between finding a mate and finding a great comic book. What initially attracts you to both is their beauty, but what makes you fall in love is their personality and depth. For this reason, there are a lot of beautiful comics I will never read, and there are a few charming and purposeful comics that I will read and love forever. Here's looking forward to more of your purposeful comics.

Eric Olive
Kraka Doom! Studios
2210 W. Grace St. Apt. 1
Richmond, VA 23220

Negative Burn,
I must say this: your magazine has been an interesting and varied experience thus far. The ensemble of artists and writers you've been pulling out of the industry amazes me. I can't wait for the Alan Moore "Songbook." Looks like a real cool jam session. Great to see that you are trying to instill some form of integrity and quality in your pages. BONESHAKER is my favorite! Didn't Phillip Hester Illustrate Dark Horse Productions' adaptation of Tom DeHaven's FREAKS AMOUR 2 or 3 years ago? The story is compelling and the images are wonderful. Thanks, Phil!
I've followed NEGATIVE BURN's BLACK MIST as well. Avido Khahaifa's work is often brilliant, though shows the strain of deadline sloppiness. James Pruett's writing is literally heavy, laden with research and overall ambience. Fascinating work!
Thanks for writing in, Eric. BONESHAKER is one of our favorites as well. Phillip has two more chapters to complete between his monthly chores on SWAMP THING and the fourth one should see print toward the end of the summer. Also, thanks for following James' BLACK MIST series. Issue number three should be on sale by the time you're reading this, so go out and buy it! That goes for all you out there who still haven't tried the series out. Hunt it down and give it a try.

Carl Pietrantonio
via CompuServe

Dear Joe, Charles, Jim & folks,

Negative Burn # 9 was quite interesting. I do like the Dominique character a great deal. Thanks for having her make an appearance here. Mr. Mamoulian continues to baffle and please at the same time. It's amazing how much there is in a simple one page at times. This one speaks again of the basic loneliness that there is so much of in the world. At least that is what it said to me.
Twilight People was... unusual. I found some of the art to be very good, and some to be very repulsive. I liked all the art of people fine, but the monster/demon creatures just didn't look like they were done by the same person. They seemed.. strange. Interesting story though. I look forward to reading the next chapter.
Arrest Record though. WOW! This was a terrific story. Now, THIS is what I'd really like to see more of. Tightly written, the story is all there in a few pages and you can get every drop of emotion out of it. I re-read this three times in a row. Great stuff!
Now, maybe I am prejudiced because I am in law enforcement and I liked the set up at the end, but nevertheless, I liked the story a great deal. Good artwork too. This was the best story in the title this month, bar none!
Lovecraft, and A Labor were not to my liking at all. There was nothing in either of these to attract me. But, that's the joy of a book like this, that there was other stuff to offset that feeling. All in all, a very good issue, better than the last couple issues, I think. I'm looking forward to more good work in the future. keep surprising me, ok?
Thanks for the fine entertainment.

Jeremy
Swanson
436 S. Johnson
#4
Iowa City, IA
52240

Dear Mr. Pruett,
I really enjoy NEGATIVE BURN, even though it's been hard to find out here. I think it's very important that you're producing a black and white non-superhero anthology. There are a lot of fans, like me, that are looking for quality books like NEGATIVE BURN.
You're the type of fan we're trying to reach, Jeremy. Thanks for giving us a try.

A. D. Hewson
344 Shannon Ave.
Newtown, Victoria
Australia 3220

Dear Joe,
I was horrified on arrival to pick up my copy of NEGATIVE BURN that I had, somehow, missed three issues of the anthology. So, in essence, this letter is to ask, beg maybe, for help after scouring the country side for the rarest of the comic species—NEGATIVE BURN. The issues 5-7 have eluded my vain attempts and so, as they say, I was hoping to the heart of the matter by writing to you and company to try to nip my crisis in the bud.
As for what I want from NEGATIVE BURN is simple. I want everything and, so far, that is exactly what I'm getting. The shades of creativity and rawness of plans, an immensity of topics and the infinity of approaches makes NEGATIVE BURN special, a brief glimpse of what dwells in the abyss rather than just what crawls out, an insight the intellect is usually deprived of.
I see NEGATIVE BURN as a place to air prototypes, to try out new things or maybe to say what you have always wanted to but have been unable to because of "commercial" considerations. Because of this, I think that any complaints are counter-productive. You said we may not like everything and so it may be, but at least we have the opportunity to evaluate it and either commend or discard each article as we see fit.
To talk about NEGATIVE BURN in particulars trivialises its real importance. Let me just say it's good enough for me to write to the United States in search of back issues.
Always good to hear from the fans down under. Hope you enjoyed your "missing" issues.